

10 Marketing Secrets from Salesforce



Introduction: Market to Your Customers in a Whole New Way

In the age of the customer, everything and everyone is smarter, more powerful, and more connected than ever before. In order to keep up with the breakneck pace of transformation, companies around the world must leverage data to understand more about what the modern customer expects from today's businesses.

Every department needs to completely shift its thinking to meet customer expectations. The service department must be more predictive and intelligent about issues that may arise for customers. Sales must be prepared to sell to customers who are moving faster and are more informed. IT must develop a mobile-first mindset that appeases mobile-first (or even mobile-only) users.



Marketing in the age of the customer depends on creating 1-to-1 journeys tailored to each customer. The future of marketing has never been more exciting – with new ways to reach customers wherever they are, in real time, thanks to the rise of the hyperconnected and multi-device consumer. The opportunities are boundless and the right tools are available for blending the physical and digital worlds to create a more closely connected, personalised experience for each and every customer.

But with great power comes great responsibility, and now, marketers are the keepers of customer experience. We don't take that task lightly at Salesforce. We've been a customer-first company for all 17 years of operation. I've been a part of the organisation for 11 of those years. Here are my 10 top secrets for making sure your marketing organisation is prepared to shift toward the age of the customer – and whatever else comes your way.



– Al Falcione
SVP, Corporate Messaging & Content
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Table of Contents

- 05** Share Your Goals
- 07** Connect to Your Customers
- 10** Launch and Relaunch
- 12** There's No Substitute for Live Events
- 14** Be Relevant in Your Industry
- 16** Create Internal Marketing Campaigns
- 18** Get Smart about Content Marketing
- 20** Use Social Media to Engage and Learn
- 23** Build Your Community
- 25** Don't Just Innovate – Market Innovation
- 26** Conclusion

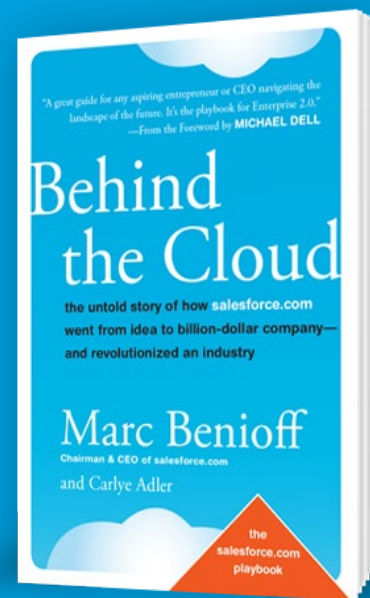
Share Your Goals

Here at Salesforce, everything we do revolves around the V2MOM. The V2MOM – which stands for vision, values, methods, obstacles, and measures – is a goal-setting exercise that starts at the very top, with Salesforce CEO Marc Benioff. He outlines his V2MOM for the coming year, then publishes it for complete transparency across the entire organisation. From there, the process continues down the management chain. All employees in the company create a V2MOM, with goals tailored to their individual jobs that are also consistently aligned with their manager's goals, whose goals are aligned to their manager's, and so on – all the way back up to Marc.



The most important part of the V2MOM, though, is that we share it across the company. Every employee can see every other employee's V2MOM. When everyone at a company is on the same page about our priorities, we're all working from the same playbook, with the same goals. But that alignment wouldn't be possible without complete companywide commitment to transparency across the V2MOM process – about what's important and why, how it will get done, what might stand in the way, and how we will measure success.

With marketing in particular, new techniques, channels, opportunities, and tools surface at a rapid rate. No matter how big your organisation or marketing department, it's impossible to tackle all of them with the same amount of resources and gusto. The V2MOM helps us make prioritisation decisions that align with the rest of the organisation's goals.



Check out [this excerpt](#) from Marc Benioff's book, Behind the Cloud, for more on the origins and history of the V2MOM.

Connect to Your Customers

When I first arrived at Salesforce, I was shocked at how much enthusiasm our customers had for the company. Previously, I had worked at Salesforce's first customer – Blue Martini Software – but traditional enterprise software didn't always lend itself to customer evangelism.

At Salesforce, the scope of customer evangelism, community, and success is impressive. In fact, we built our whole business model around it. We believe that every company's success hinges on the success of its customers. So, of course, every Salesforce customer is crucial to our success.

In the past, if customers really liked your product, they could tell their friends and family – which was no more than 20 or 30 people, realistically. In the social media and digital age, when a single message can gain millions of impressions in minutes, customers can be a company’s best advocate (and its best marketers).

You’ve probably heard that people are more likely to trust recommendations from their peers than from brands. Well, the same goes for businesses. Why should a company trust us when we say our products and services are great? We obviously think they’re great, or we wouldn’t be selling them. Why not empower our customers to tell their own success stories, and let people make up their minds from there?

That’s the idea behind our customer marketing – and it works. In fact, you’d be hard-pressed to find any Salesforce marketing materials that don’t feature our customers telling their story in their own words. It’s authentic, it’s insightful – our customers often have a completely fresh perspective on our products – and it’s always amazing to hear our story told in brand-new ways.

“Salesforce is helping us become a customer-centric company.”

Jeroen Tas, Chief Executive Officer,
Informatics Solutions and Services,
Philips Healthcare

“App Cloud helps us offer the kind of service that – like great design – never goes out of style.”

John Edelman, CEO, Design Within Reach

“How students engage and learn has changed. With Analytics Cloud, we have the best insights to adapt.”

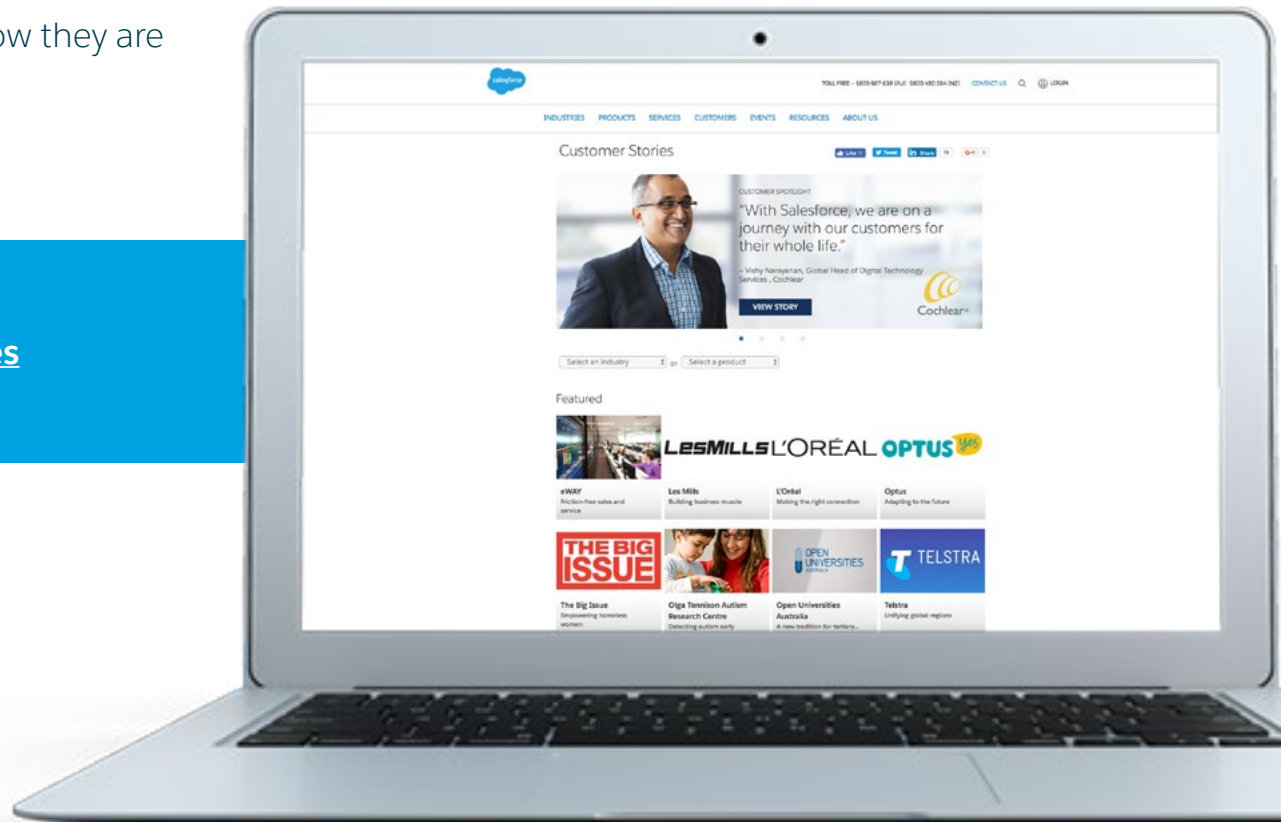
Brook Colangelo, CTO,
Houghton Mifflin Harcourt

At Salesforce, our customers are an integral piece of our marketing engine – especially during our biggest week of the year. At our annual Dreamforce conference, our customers are everywhere – smiling on billboards and massive banners, featured in videos and onstage during the keynotes, and brought to life throughout the event. Dreamforce attendees get to see how real companies are using Salesforce to transform their businesses, and companies get a global stage to showcase how they are innovating. It’s a win-win.

Check out how Salesforce markets our customers at the [Customer Success Stories](#) home page.

“Salesforce lets Domain engage with our industry at unprecedented scale.”

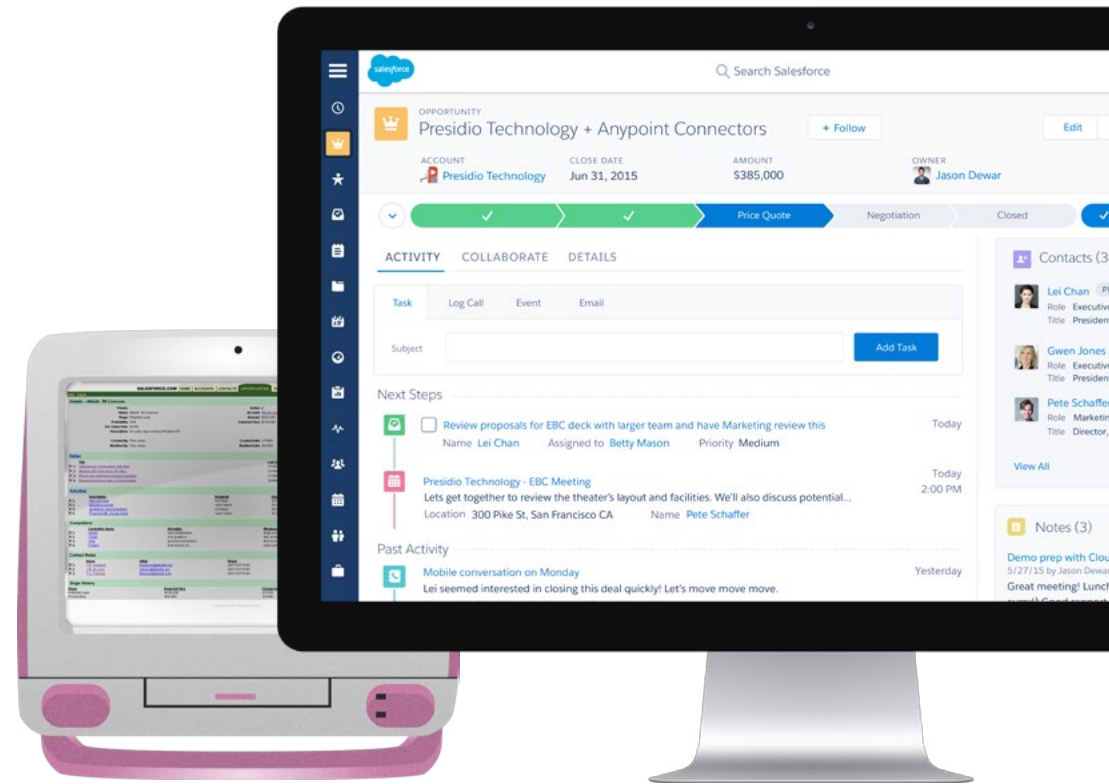
Mark Cohen, Chief Technology Officer,
Domain Group



Launch and Relaunch

Product launches are an essential piece of any marketing strategy, especially among enterprise software companies. From Steve Jobs' famed [1984 unveiling](#) of the Apple Macintosh, to today's splashy press launches, the product launch has always been a company's first – and best – opportunity to define the message around its core value offering.

So how does Salesforce do it? Just like our V2MOM, we start with a vision. And, of course, that vision is always closely intertwined with our customers. Before we start, we ask ourselves what we want to help our customers achieve, and then we build the roadmap to get there.



But the launch itself should align a vision (the why behind what we're announcing) with product (the what we are announcing). What makes launches so successful is making them relevant to what's happening in the world of our customers. Whether it's a long-term shift – like mobile computing – or a short-term fad, you need relevance at a point in time. Then the trick is to keep relaunching the product. Over a period of months, you need to keep announcing new features, new customers, and new successes with the product to keep the momentum going.

Here's an example: In 2015, we unveiled a new technology – Salesforce Lightning. Lightning is an experience, a platform, and an ecosystem, all designed to help companies connect to their customers in entirely new ways. Over the course of a year, we have had and will continue to have 10+ launches and announcements related to Lightning. The technology keeps advancing, we keep adding customers, and our ecosystem of partners keeps growing.

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There's No Substitute for Live Events

Nowhere does our community come to life more than at Dreamforce. It's the world's largest cloud computing conference, and what many refer to as "the Super Bowl of cloud computing." It is, in a word, massive, with over 160,000 attendees (plus millions online) and thousands of sessions. And its impact is just as huge: In 2015, Dreamforce attendees and sponsors donated more than 1 million books to schools in need.

After Dreamforce, no one would fault us for wanting to take a break from events for the rest of the year. But that's not the way business works in the age of the customer. You can't just expect customers and prospects to come to you one week out of the year – you also have to go to them.


That's the power behind our always-on events roadshow. Throughout the year you can find Salesforce events all around the globe – at our

World Tour events, third-party events, Connections, small businesses events, and many more year-round industry- and product-specific events. If you want to learn more about leveraging Salesforce to transform your business, there's a Salesforce event that you can attend in person or watch online. Each event is a valuable opportunity for our customers to connect with Salesforce and with each other, and to foster that invaluable knowledge transfer that leads to continued success.

Be Relevant in Your Industry

You may think of your business (and its customers) in terms of product, but that's not how your customers are thinking. In order to market in a relevant way to your customers, you have to speak their language – an industry-specific language. We call this the language of the customer. For marketing at Salesforce, that means expanding the way that we tell our customers' stories, focusing on them and their industry first, and the product second.



A photograph of a busy conference booth. In the foreground, a man and a woman are looking at a laptop. Behind them, several other people are seated at a long white counter, each with a laptop. The background is a large, modern exhibition space with blue lighting and a sign that says "Protect & Secure Your Data".

The differences among industries are vast, and marketing messages can't be one-size-fits-all. Don't make your customers do the legwork to understand how your product could fit within their industry, department, or role. Do the heavy lifting for them with tailored, intelligent marketing messages that speak to their own individual goals – and the challenges they face reaching them.

Create Internal Marketing Campaigns

As important as the external-facing side of marketing is, never forget about internal marketing. Your employees are not just your key to success; if empowered appropriately, they can also be powerful brand advocates. In effect, they're your brand ambassadors – the living, breathing embodiment of that marketing message you're pushing to customers. Tap into the powerful connection between employee and product, and employees will be your greatest marketing asset. Without that connection, you'll have employees who are disengaged, uninspired, and misinformed.



Internal alignment is essential to moving quickly and keeping priorities straight. But the V2MOM is just one piece – to keep the drumbeat going, you need internal marketing campaigns to align the entire team around a common goal and prevent siloed activities that undermine your larger corporate message.

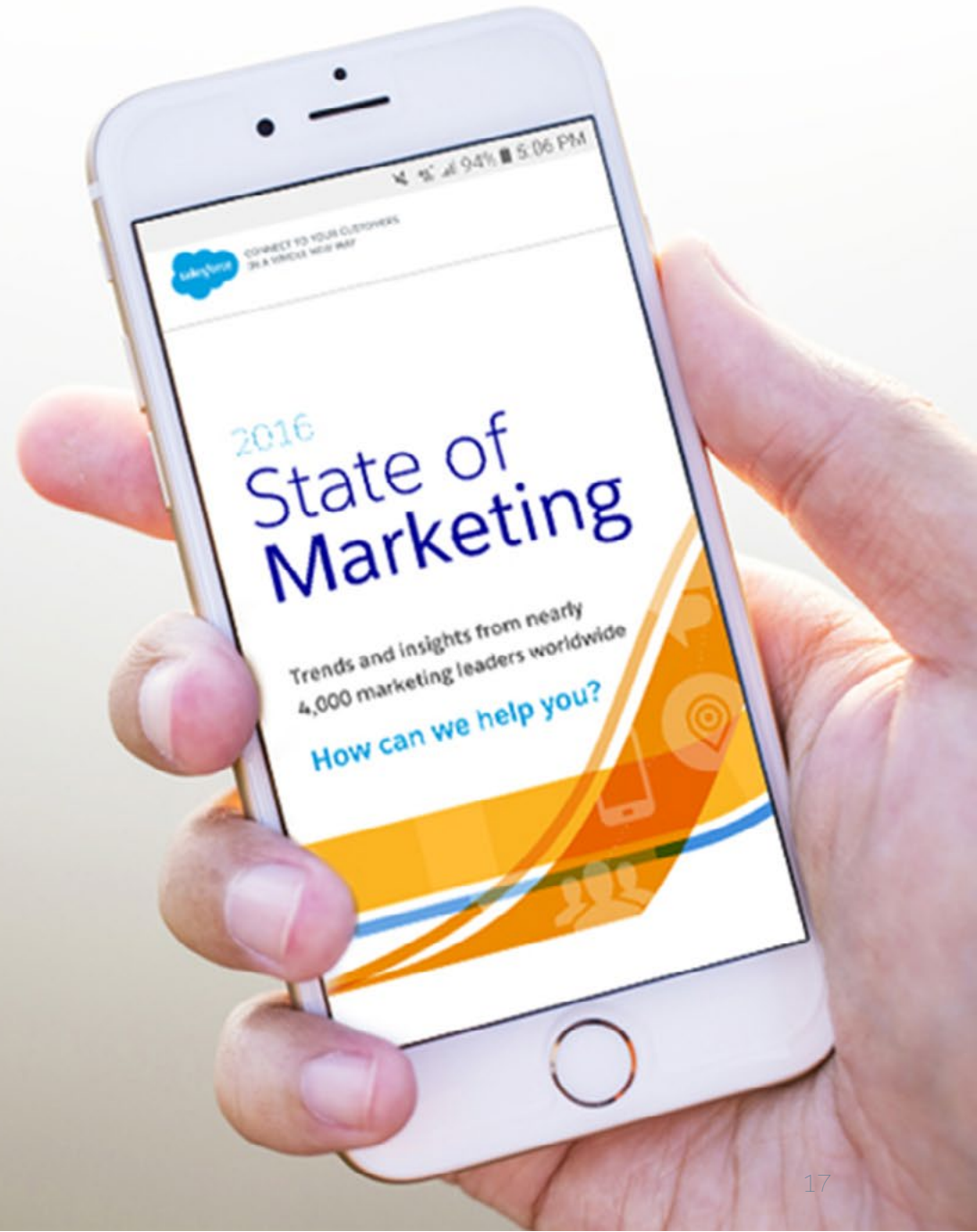
Whether it's a video, an email, an in-person announcement, or any other communication method, keep your internal marketing messages consistent with your external messages so there's no mismatch. And plan out your internal campaigns the same way you would an external one: Whom do you want to reach? What do you want them to do? How will you measure success?



Get Smart about Content Marketing

Leveraged effectively, content marketing can be an enormous asset to your business. With a low barrier to entry, it's a great way to generate awareness, engage prospects and customers, and grow your bottom line. Where many companies miss the mark is in the strategic aspect of content marketing: It's easy enough to start a blog, for example, and many companies fail to consider whether they need one, what its role in the buyer journey should be, and how they'll measure success.

Check out the [2016 State of Marketing Report](#).



What sets content marketing apart from traditional digital marketing is that its value comes not just from the message an audience receives, but also from how the audience experiences that message. Content marketing seeks to make marketing materials so valuable and engaging that a value transfer occurs even before someone becomes a customer.

At Salesforce, content marketing has impact in three major ways: awareness, engagement, and conversion. Some of our content (a blog post by a thought leader, for instance) is designed for prospects at the very top of the marketing funnel – they may lack any knowledge

of our products or even our brand – so our only goal is to raise awareness about who we are and what we do. Other kinds of content, such as social campaigns or infographics, are designed to engage and educate prospects or customers, and still others are product-specific and are designed to help prospective buyers make an informed decision.

And content marketing isn't just about the content itself – it's also about how you distribute it. Without a smart distribution strategy designed to match the target audience and deliver results in the right categories, your content may as well be invisible.

Want to be smarter about measuring your content marketing?

[GET THE E-BOOK](#)



Use Social Media to Engage and Learn

In the late 1990s, the concept of 1-to-1 marketing started to take off, fueled by the success of the web and the vision of being able to personalise content on a website. But it wasn't until social media exploded in the late 2000s that companies realised that they needed to respond on a 1-to-1 basis to customers on a massive scale. The scale exceeded anything that call centers or email had prompted before.

Many companies panicked, but others saw the opportunity.

Successful companies like KLM and Dell realised that social media is much more than a marketing tool – it’s also an engagement and a learning tool. Your customers and prospects interact with your company more often than ever, thanks to the omnipresence and multitude of social media channels, which means more opportunities to market to each customer at each touchpoint. But modern marketing isn’t about shouting messages at your prospects – it’s about having a conversation that adds value.

Take a look at your company’s Twitter feed, for example. Is it all a one-sided conversation, or are you engaging with followers: answering questions, replying to

praise, and addressing complaints? Take advantage of these engagement opportunities to create the 1-to-1 experiences that surprise and delight your customers.

Social media can tell you what sorts of content or topics resonate best (and worst) with your audience. Ideally, you have a social media strategy that is tailored to each individual channel based on the data that tells you what content does best on each channel. Learn from what has worked in the past – but don’t be afraid to try something new. Organic, or unpaid, social media offers a low-calorie, high-engagement opportunity to test new ideas before expanding those ideas or messages to the rest of the marketing department.

Learn how to keep customers by being your own marketer with [this free eBook](#).

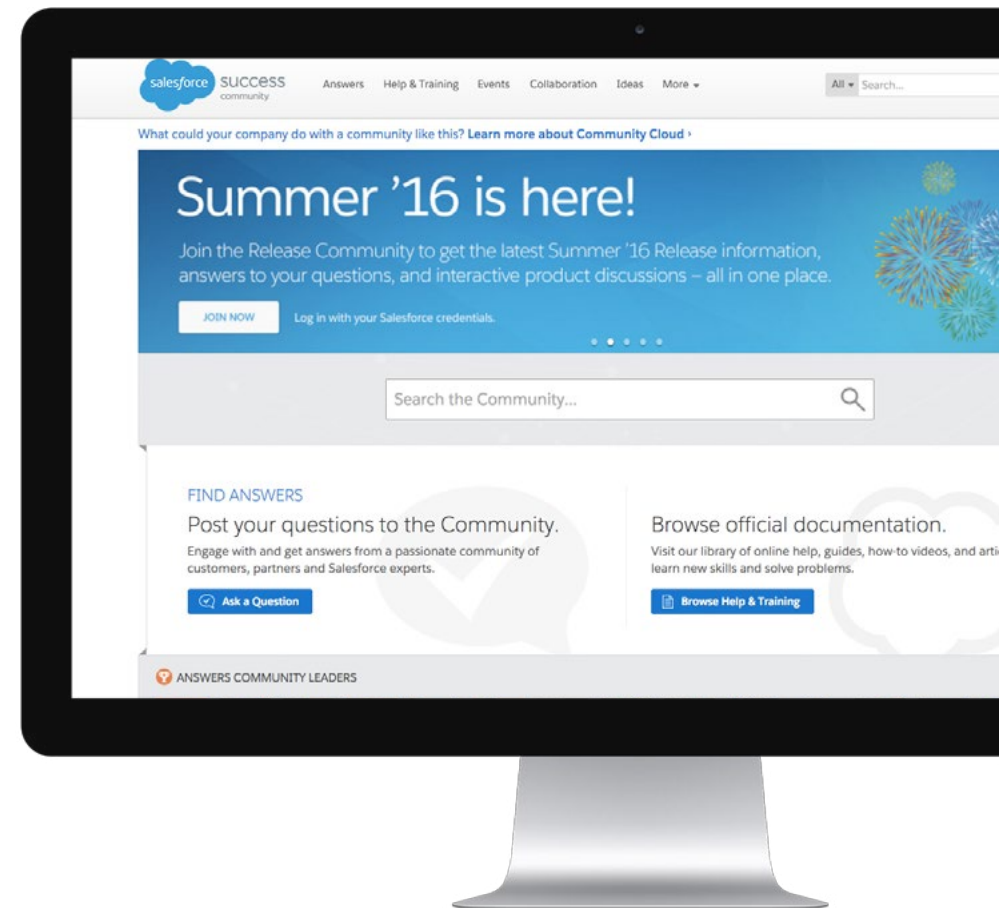
[GET THE E-BOOK](#)



Build Your Community

Modern consumers are informed, empowered, and connected. They're consulting 10+ sources of information before they make a purchase decision, and they're more than halfway through the buyer journey before they even contact your company. They know how to do their own research, make their own purchase decisions, and source knowledge from their peers.

So, as important as delivering the right events, messages, and content to your audience may be, sometimes you just need to get out of your customers' way. At Salesforce, our 2 million member-strong [Success Community](#) is an incredible source of ideas, advice, insight, and collaboration. As a central location for customers to ask questions, offer feedback, learn about products and features, and share best practices, the Success Community is a powerful tool for helping our customers help themselves.



While much of its value comes from the customers themselves, our own customer success managers also live and breathe the community, helping out with answers, content, and resources to ensure a valuable, knowledge-driven community experience. They also help fuel the [IdeaExchange](#), a community-driven innovation hub where community members can suggest and vote on product enhancements they'd like to see us develop. The Success Community has everything you need to be a thriving Salesforce super-user, and it

enables Salesforce to deliver personalised content that we can ensure is relevant to each user.

The [customer community](#) is a treasure trove for your customers, partners and staff. It is loaded with insights for you to understand more about what they are interested in and confused about – and how they're using your products or services in ways you didn't even anticipate. For marketers, the value of this type of information cannot be overstated.

Communities are the future of small business success. [Find out why eWay decided to build one.](#)

GET THE E-BOOK



Don't Just Innovate – Market Innovation

Business is moving faster than ever, and to keep up, you must be prepared to innovate at a rate that didn't even seem possible in the past. At Salesforce, one of the ways we continue to deliver new features is with our three releases per year.

But it's not enough to just deliver these new releases and then call it a day. We want all of our customers to know about the incredible new features that will be available – especially since much of the time, these releases were specific requests from our customers via the IdeaExchange. You can't just innovate and expect everyone to get it – you must be able to explain the *why* powering the innovation. Marketing our releases is all about making sure that our customers understand how they can leverage new Salesforce features and

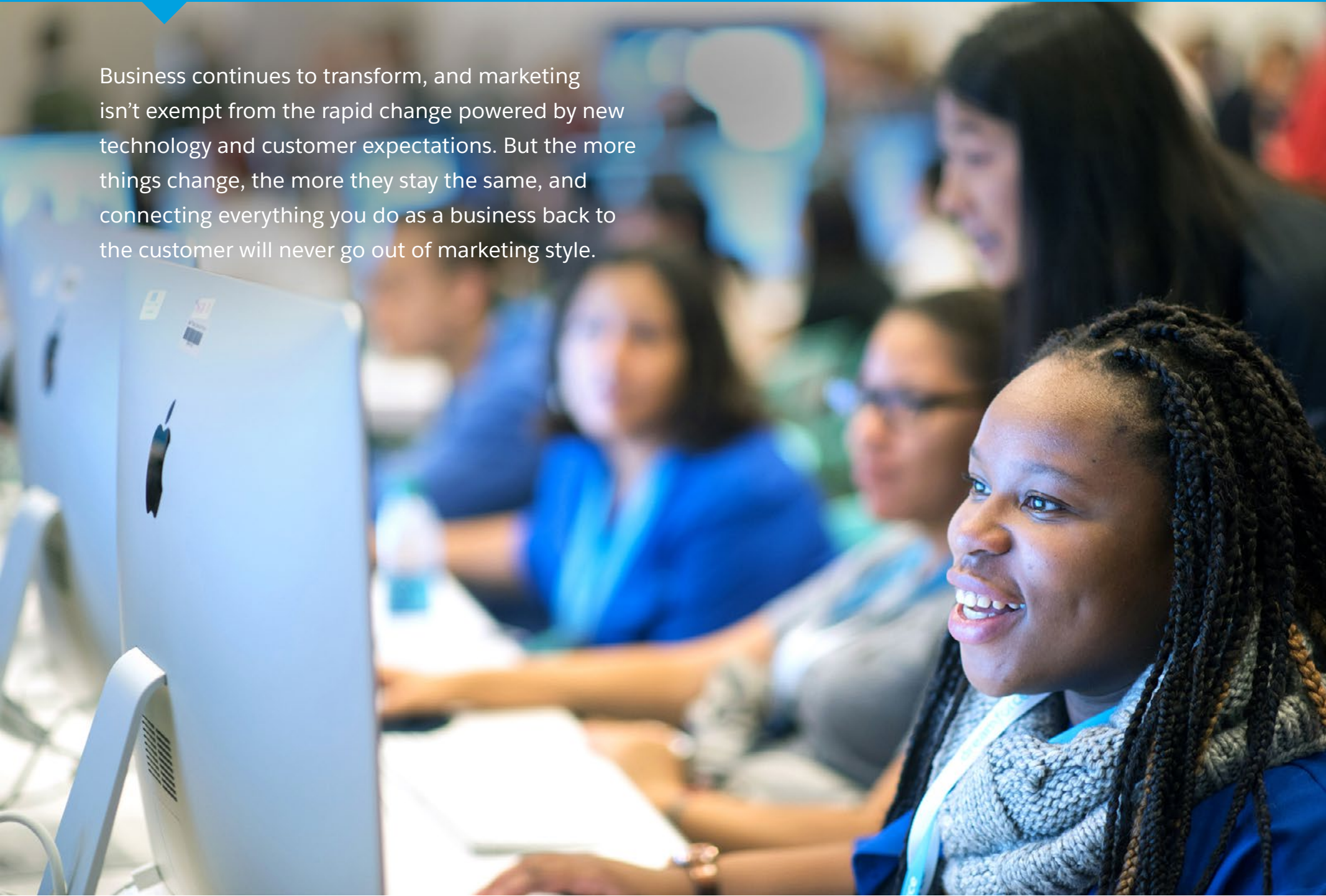
products to achieve their goals, and it's also about positioning Salesforce as a constant source of forward-looking innovation.

This goes for any value you think should drive your organisation: If you're in marketing, it's not just about doing it – it's also about marketing it. That might sound like shameless self-promotion, but it's actually just educating your audience about what you're doing.



Conclusion

Business continues to transform, and marketing isn't exempt from the rapid change powered by new technology and customer expectations. But the more things change, the more they stay the same, and connecting everything you do as a business back to the customer will never go out of marketing style.





**CONNECT TO YOUR CUSTOMERS
IN A WHOLE NEW WAY**



Blog



Facebook



Twitter



LinkedIn

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